



Title page of the Schultzen recorder sonatas (with the permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris).

# THE VIRTUOSO RECORDER SONATAS OF THE MYSTERIOUS 'SIGNORE' SCHULTZEN

Newly available in a modern edition, the six recorder sonatas of A.H. Schultzen may be the first sonatas from the middle Baroque written with the recorder professional in mind

by Patricio Portell

PERHAPS THE REASON why Schultzen's six sonatas have never attracted our attention before is that almost everything that can be known about them is surrounded with mystery.

They are numbered 228 in the 1737 music catalogue of the prolific editor, Estienne Roger of Amsterdam (see François Lesure, *Bibliographie des éditions musicales publiées par Estienne Roger et Michel-Charles le Cène* [Amsterdam, 1696-1743], Paris: Société française de musicologie, 1969, p. 80). But the first trace of these sonatas is found much earlier, in 1704, in a French translation of Josiah Burchett's *Mémoires de tout ce qui s'est passé de plus considérable sur mer*, which was published by Roger. At the end of the book, as was the current practice of the time, there is a complete catalogue listing all the musical publications of the editorial house and also the foreign editions sold in the shops of Amsterdam and London (where, as we learn from another section of the Burchett *Mémoires*, "François & Paul Vaillant, Libraires dans le Strand," Roger had stationed representatives). The music catalogue is divided into different sections: according to instrument, according to ensemble (instruments or voices), and finally, according to country or to style (French, Italian, or English). In the section, "Pièces à la Angloise et à la Italienne pour les flûtes, les Hautbois

et les violons," Schultzen's sonatas for recorder and thorough bass are advertised for the first time, together with six sonatas for violin or oboe and thorough bass also by him. Each item cost two florins, which appears to have been the usual price for collections of six sonatas (see Illustration 1). Since they do not seem to appear in earlier catalogues, the date of Burchett's *Memories* would indicate that the sonatas in question saw the light of day in (or just before) 1704.

These two collections of sonatas are the only known published works of Schultzen. No other compositions by this mysterious composer have so far been found, even in manuscript, and nothing at all is known about his nationality or where he lived and worked. Apart from the initials "A. H.," nothing is known of his Christian names. There also seems to be some confusion regarding the spelling of his family name, which appears in Roger's music catalogues published in 1716 and 1737 as "Schultsen" or "Schultzen." The *New Grove* (1980) had no entry for Schultzen, while the early dictionaries, such as Walther's *Musikalisches Lexicon* from 1732, give only the titles of the two mentioned sets of sonatas, presumably copied from Roger's catalogue, but no details whatsoever of the composer's life. Unfortunately, the collection of sonatas for violin or oboe does not seem to

# THE MYSTERIOUS 'SIGNORE' SCHULTZEN (cont.)

**Illustration 1:**  
The Schultzen sonatas  
were first listed in 1704 in the  
Roger catalogue appended to  
Josiah Burchett's *Mémoires de tout...*  
(shown with the permission of the  
Royal Library, Copenhagen).

have survived, and apparently, the only copy of the collection of sonatas for recorder is preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

The title of the edition is in Italian, which gives it a cosmopolitan character and implies the style of the sonatas. It is difficult to believe that Schultzen was addressed as "Signore"—more likely it should have been "Herr." When the recorder sonatas are studied carefully, it becomes evident that the composer was indeed inspired by the Italian style; however, it is also possible to detect a personal Transalpine influence, which—in addition to the name of the composer, obviously—lends support to the conjecture that Schultzen was of German or perhaps north European origin.

Between 1700 and 1705, when Schultzen's sonatas appeared in print, the recorder was at its height in popularity among the music connoisseurs. Works for recorder and continuo as well as for two recorders and continuo by composers such as Servaas de Konink, Daniel Purcell, Got-

tfried Keller, Gottfried Finger, Andreas Parcham, James Paisible, Nicholas Demoivre, William Croft, Henry Eccles, Johann Christoph Pepusch and Gasparo Visconti poured from the printing presses. The first recorder adaptations of Arcangelo Corelli's violin sonatas and trio sonatas also appeared around this same time. Notably, many of these composers lived and worked early in the golden period of the recorder in London. Quite a few of the composers were, in addition, the favorites of the flourishing publication industry led by Roger in Amsterdam, Walsh and Hare in London, and Boivan and Ballard in Paris.

If Schultzen's compositions are compared with other sonatas for the recorder published in this period, it is possible to observe a great difference both in the level of invention and in the required technical skills. The usual repertoire consisted mainly of duos without a bass, sonatas for one recorder or two recorders with continuo, and suites generally written as trios (that is, two recorders and continuo). Among these, it is possible to find sonatas of ex-

<i>Catalogue de Musique.</i>	<i>Catalogue de Musique.</i>
Six Sonates à une Flute & une Basse continue de Mrs. Greber & Fede, gravé f. 2.	Ravenschroft alias Redieri opera prima sonate à tré, col. violoncello, gravé f. 4.
Six Sonates à une Flute & une Basse C. composées par Mr. A. H. Schultzen f. 2.	Anton. Caldara opera prima, sonate à tré col. violoncello, gravé f. 5.
Six Sonates à un Hauboïs & une Basse C. composées par Mr. A. H. Schultzen. f. 2.	Anton. Caldara opera seconda, sonate da camera à tré, gravé f. 3. 10
Sonates pour les violons à 2 violons & une Basse Continue, la plupart avec un violoncello ou viole de Gambe.	Antonio Luigi Baldacini opera prima, sonate à tré col. violoncello, gravé f. 4.
Corelli opera prima sonate à 3 col. violoncello, gravé f. 4.	Maria Ruggieri opera quarta, sonate à tré col. violoncello, gravé f. 4.
Corelli opera seconda baletti à 3, gravé f. 2. 10	Christophoro Pez Opera prima, sonate à tré col. violoncello gravé f. 5.
Corelli opera tertia sonat. à 3. col. violonc. gravé f. 4.	Six sonates de Mr. de Swaen à 2 violons, un violoncello, & bass. cont. gravé f. 3.
Corelli opera quarta baletti à tré, gravé f. 3.	Antonio Buonperti Gentilhomme di Trento, Opera seconda, sonate da camera à tré, gravé f. 3. 10
Bernardi opera seconda, sonat. à tré, gravé. f. 3.	Torelli Opera quinta, 6 simphonie à 3, e 6 concerti à 4, 2 viol. alto e basso, gravé f. 4.
Tonini opera seconda, son. à 3 col. violonc: gravé f. 4.	Giuseppe Torelli Opera seconda, Baletti da camera a tré, gravé f. 3. 10
Marini opera terza, 12 sonat. les 8 premieres à deux violons, Basse & B. cont. & les quatre dernieres à six instrumens, gravé f. 4. 10	Finger Opera prima, 12 sonates les 3. premieres à 1 violon, une viole de gambe & 1 bass. cont. les 3 suivantes à 2 violons, 1 violoncello & 1 bass. cont. les 3 autres à deux viol, une Haute contre & bass. contin. & les trois dernieres à trois viol. & une bass. gravé f. 5.
Marini opera quinta baletti à la Francese à 3, gravé f. 3. 10	Gerardo Han, Opera prima, sonate à tré col. violoncello, gravé f. 4. 10
Aurelio Paolini opera prima, sonate à tré, col. violoncello, gravé f. 3.	Andrea Fiore Academico Filarmico Opera prima, sonate à tré col. violoncello, gravé f. 4.
Antonio Veracini opera prima, sonate à tré col. violoncello, gravé f. 4.	Henrici Albicastro, Opera prima, sonate à tré col. violoncello, gravé f. 4.
Tomazo Albinoni opera prima, sonate à tré col. violoncello, gravé f. 4.	Pietro Franchi, Opera prima, sonate à tré col. violoncello, gravé f. 4.
Josephi Benedicti opus octavum, sonate à tré col. violoncello, gravé f. 4.	Antonio Carelio, Opera prima, 12 sonate à tré col. violoncello e bass. cont. gravé f. 5.
H. Anders opera seconda sonat. à 3 & 4 instr. gravé f. 4.	Giacomo Sherard, Opera prima, douze sonate à tré col. violoncello, gravé f. 6.
Giulio Taglietti opera seconda, sei concerti e 4 simphonie à tré, gravé f. 4.	Raven-
	God-

ceptional interest and of such high quality that they certainly deserve attention. (One example is a Sonata II in D minor for recorder and basso continuo composed in a canzona-like style by William Croft, or possibly "An Italian Mr." It concludes with a beautiful adagio in the form of a ground bass or chaconne.) But most of this repertoire can be characterized as simple and sometimes naive. It was not until around five years later (that is, after the publication of Schultzen's sonatas) that music for the recorder of the same virtuosic level and complexity in composition went through the presses.

In William Topham's Op. 1 sonatas, published in 1701, one can find some elements that are similar to Schultzen. The role of the continuo part, for instance, mediates actively with the soloist as in a dialogue—though in Topham this detail occurs in a much simpler way. Schultzen's largos of the first two sonatas are built on a ground bass, suggesting a chaconne or passacaglia, as one often finds in English compositions. There can be no doubt that Schultzen was modern for his time—in many aspects even more advanced than his contemporaries. Schultzen's bass parts are not just a harmonic foundation or accompaniment. In addition, his choices of harmony, use of virtuosic elements, and modes of expression belong to the practice of a later period; they are more typical of the music of Francesco Mancini, Georg Philip Telemann, and Johann Sebastian Bach (see Illustration 2).

Schultzen's sonatas follow the classical structure of the *sonata da chiesa* with the typical movements slow-fast-slow-fast. Apart from sonata IV, the first movements are all in duple metre with many suspensions. The third movements are usually more homophonic and written in triple metre. While the fourth movements have a dance-like quality often reminiscent of a *gigue*, the standard dance forms encountered in the so-called *sonata da camera* are not found. Besides revealing an able knowledge of the Italian style of the sonata, the collection also reveals a profound understanding of the Corellian style. This is, for instance, evident in the composition of basses and some of the "typical" themes, especially in Sonata IV. Yet the basses often differ from Corelli's in having a more melodic structure and having a *cantabile* character; it is noticeable that the thorough basses are not merely accompaniment, but at times very elaborate and always rich in invention. The themes are very personal: the slow movements are po-

**Illustration 2: Original recorder part of the second movement, *Un poco presto*, Sonata V (with the permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris).**

etic, choleric, melancholic, dramatic, or sometimes pessimistic. At other times, we find a ground bass very much like a chaconne, as in the third movement of Sonata I, or a marvellous passacaglia of emotional simplicity, as in the second movement of Sonata II. The fast movements are lively and often call for virtuosic agility—not only from the recorder player but also from the bass player or players.

The writing of the sonatas demonstrates maturity and solidity. It is not difficult to find chromaticism or complex harmonies and dissonances. The music is not

easy to play at the first sight-reading—several readings are necessary in order to be able to interpret it (see Illustration 3).

When playing and studying the sonatas, it becomes clear that they are idiomatically written for the recorder, thus indicating that the composer had an intimate knowledge of the instrument. Schultzen's choice of tonalities and his use of tessitura emphasize this detail: D minor, G minor, G major, and B $\flat$  major. The virtuosic passages are adapted perfectly to the potential of the instrument, even if in some cases a solid technique is required in order

**Illustration 3: from the second movement, Presto, Sonata III (Editions Papillon, Genève).**

E.Pa. 0300 A

**Illustration 4: from the second movement, Allegro, Sonata V (Editions Papillon, Genève).**

E.Pa. 0300 B

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to play them. On this basis, it is tempting to suggest that Schultzen must have played the recorder himself and maybe also the oboe—perhaps he wrote the sonatas for a virtuoso recorder player whom he knew.

A very interesting and curious detail is seen on the title page—that is, the mention of the bassoon, and not the viola da gamba or the violoncello, to play the bass part (*o Vero Fagotto*). The bassoon was considered the best instrument to accompany wind instruments in the current practice of the time. The writing of the bass is idiomatic and adapted perfectly to the tessitura of the instrument, but at the same time it also requires good technical skills.

Is it possible to interpret Schultzen's compositions as being among the first sonatas for the professional recorder player of the middle Baroque period? Keeping in mind the date of publication, and comparing these sonatas with other works for this instrument printed around the same time, the answer seems to be yes. The only compositions published before 1704 requiring advanced technical skills appear to be Corelli's Op. V. These, however, are not originally written for the recorder, but for

the violin. In Schultzen's sonatas, not only the recorder and the bassoon parts require able players; the complexity of the thorough bass also demands an experienced harpsichordist (see Illustration 4).

It is hoped that this article will provoke curiosity and interest among recorder players wishing to extend their repertoire and encourage them to work towards a wider appreciation of the music composed by the unknown genius, A. H. Schultzen.

Patricio Portell prepared the new modern edition of the Schultzen sonatas discussed in this article: A. H. Schultzen: Six Sonatas pour flûte à bec... et clavicin ou basson, Editions Papillon ([www.editionspapillon.ch](http://www.editionspapillon.ch); [editionp@worldom.ch](mailto:editionp@worldom.ch)): Drize 1998. He studied recorder with Koko Taylor at the Centre de Musique Ancienne de Genève, Switzerland, and is presently editor of Le Rat de Bibliothèque ("The Library Rat"), the Papillon series in which the Schultzen sonatas appeared. Future editions will include recorder sonatas by Geminiani and Castrucci, and opera airs by Handel. The original text for this article was translated from Spanish by Peter Hauge.